

Herefordshire Business Board (HBB)

Notes / Actions from the Meeting – Tuesday 13th March 2018

Chair: Frank Myers (FM). **Present:** Deborah Gittoes (DG), Ian Peake (IP), Karen Usher (KU), John Jones (JJ), Sharon Smith (SS),

In attendance: Geoff Hughes (GHu)

Apologies: Andrew Henry (AH), Doug Barrat (DB), David Harlow (DH), Eric Drummond (ED), Gill Hamer (GH), Mark Pearce (MP), Mary Thompson (MT), Paul Rone (PR) Stephen Eckley (SE). Nick Webster (NW).

1. Welcome and apologies

FM welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and Actions Arising

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by the board.

The following actions have been **completed** since the last meeting:

- 11/07 Action 1:** Copies of job description and Person Specification for the support role to the Business Board will be available before the next meeting. GH
- 12/09 Action 5:** Housing Infrastructure Fund – the Board supported writing letters of support for the bid to help in the lobbying process. ALL
- 14/11 Action 5:** Arrange for next meeting to be held at HWGTA in Hereford RJ.
- 14/11 Action 4:** Share information on planned projects with HBB. NW/DB **Update:** This is now a standing item on the agenda.
- 14/11 Action 6:** Provide further information on the plans for the Robert Owen Academy. **Update:** DG informed the Board that there will be no ongoing funding and the school will be closed from the summer. Students will have to be placed within other schools within the County
- 23/01 Action 2:** Circulate links to the Bypass Consultation and RIS2 when available. NW
- 23/01 Action 3:** Meet to discuss options for recruiting and employing HBB support. FM, SS. **Update:** This meeting did not happen but has been superseded by events.

The following actions are **ongoing**:

- 17/01 Action 7:** HBB nomination required for the steering group of the Marches Business Improvement Grant. ALL
- 11/07 Action 8:** Business representation on the Marches Skills Board needed. FM
- 14/11 Action 1:** Marches LEP Skills Programme Officer to collate learning from other rural areas to help delivery in Herefordshire. GH
- 14/11 Action 2:** Agree the recruitment process, role and responsibilities of the sector champions and work with the nominations committee (FM, DG, JJ) to recruit to the roles. NW
- 14/11 Action 3:** Set in place a process of monthly reporting from the Marches Growth Hub. NW/GH
- 23/01 Action 1:** Meet to progress ideas around skills. FM, IP, SS, DS

Discussions following on from reviewing the skills actions lead to three areas for consideration:

Can the Marches LEP skills sub group (if there is one) do an audit of the current Herefordshire apprenticeship provision? Or does this collective piece of work already exist? If not (to both of the above) should the HBB do this piece of work? This can then be reviewed to see if we think the existing provision is adequate

Should we hold a Herefordshire Skills Show in 2018/2019? Sharon to circulate details for the recent Worcestershire skills show - numbers, successes etc.

Ask the Herefordshire CEC Enterprise Advisor Administrator to report to the HBB on how the project is going. How many schools are signed up and have each of them got their employer engagement strategy in place? Does this include advising young people on all their future options - University, Apprenticeships and The World of Work (businesses)?

13/03 Action 1: Progress the questions around skills with the Marches Skills Board and local representatives to develop a full picture of skills in Herefordshire in order to develop future plans. **FM, IP, SS, DG**

13/03 Action 2: Circulate information about the Worcestershire Skills Show. **SS**

Supporting information:

- Marches LEP Skills Plan https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/marches_lep_skills_plan/Skills-Plan-Feb-2017-final.pdf
- Marches LEP Skills Action Plan https://www.marcheslep.org.uk/download/marches_lep_skills_plan/Skills-Action-Plan-December-2017.pdf

3. Hereford Bypass

GHu presented to the Board (copy of presentation attached with notes) and discussions ensued. There was agreement from the HBB that they are happy to write a letter and put out a press release sharing their support for the development of the bypass. HBB are not in a position to question the expert advice on individual routes but want the broader benefits that the bypass brings.

HC have to keep providing evidence for support, as they apply for more funding. The Chair highlighted the need to improve the communication of the message and it would be helpful if the letter and press release could show the economic value of the bypass - data, facts, so the HBB can continue to promote the benefits.

13/03 Action 3: GHu to provide draft letter to include information on wider benefits. **NW/GH**

4. Herefordshire Investment Partnership

There is currently a delegation from the Midlands Engine including the Marches LEP with representatives from Herefordshire Council and NMITE attending MIPIM with a view to encouraging investment into the city. Success will be enquiries and visits to the area.

Planning permission for the new Enterprise Park (Model Farm) at Ross on Wye has been granted and HC are looking at the purchase of more land in the area.

DB has been to Westminster to keep MPs up to date with progress on the HIP projects and has met with Keepmoat, the local authority's preferred development partner, to build the relationship with the Investment Partnership. Queries have been raised locally about Keepmoat and GH confirmed there will be a press release upon appointment.

5. NMITE

The latest funding application has been submitted. New staff doing well and the project is moving forward. The final senior staff member, Chief Fundraising officer, arrives on 23rd March. There will be twenty five students arriving in September 2018 to spend a year introducing the student voice into the design of the University which will include testing the block format, technology etc.

To date NMITE have received 400 expressions of interest (aiming for 1000), with 75 students arriving to study in 2019.

6. Marches LEP

Recruitment of new LEP board members is closing on 15th March. The Midlands Engine Investment fund is available with four funding streams, details are available on the Marches Growth Hub website and the quick reference guide is available here: <https://www.marchesgrowthhub.co.uk/assets/meif-quick-ref-guide.pdf>

The Marches LEP is developing the next phase of its strategy and consultation workshops need to be undertaken locally.

It was agreed to review the Herefordshire Business Board membership; what do we currently have with Board members and Sector Champions and then decide what else is needed. The board agreed that the overall Herefordshire Business Board should not be too large.

The Marches LEP Board meeting agenda was shared.

13/03 Action 4: Organise consultation workshop on Marches LEP strategy development. **DRE/FM**

13/03 Action 5: Review of Herefordshire Business Board. **ALL** Please also see outstanding action

14/11 Action 2: Agree the recruitment process, role and responsibilities of the sector champions and work with the nominations committee (**FM, DG, JJ**) to recruit to the roles. **NW**

7. Any Other Business

It has been confirmed that, subject to the formality of the Chairman meeting her, Daisie Rees-Evans (DRE), who is a Policy Administrator at Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, is proposed to take over administration of Herefordshire Business Board.

The issue of Rotherwas leases was raised and GHu confirmed that the land is owned by the council and there are three different approaches to the leases. When Enterprise Zone status was granted for part of Rotherwas a new approach to leases was needed and freeholds were to be sold. Herefordshire Council needed to get best value for land and seven of the eight sales have been purchased by the tenant. 70% of properties will go to market and communication will be sent to tenants in advance. If tenant not successful in purchase, their rights to occupy will not be affected. Discussions were held around the timing of communication, termination of leases and tenants needing to look for new accommodation.

13/03 Action 6: Share briefing note on proposed land sales. **GHu/NW**

The merger of Herefordshire and Ludlow College and Shropshire College is currently out to consultation. Further information is available on the college website <http://www.hlcollege.ac.uk/merger>

8. Dates of Future Meetings:

- Tuesday 15th May
- Tuesday 17th July
- Tuesday 18th September
- Tuesday 20th November

All meetings will be held in the Seminar Room (unless stated otherwise) at the Hereford Business Solutions Centre, Skylon Court, Coldnose Road, Rotherwas, Hereford, HR2 6JS

9. Close

Links to Marches strategic boards (ctrl & click to follow the links):

[Hereford Enterprise Zone / Skylon Park](#)

[Herefordshire Business Board](#)

[Marches LEP](#)

[Shropshire Business Board](#)

Telford Business Board – *to be confirmed*